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Security Council

Fifty-first Year

Provisional

3632nd Meeting

Thursday, 15 February 1996, 4.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mrs. Albright	(United States of America)
Members:	Botswana	Mr. Legwaila
	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Germany	Mr. Eitel
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Mano Queta
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wibisono
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Wlosowicz
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

96-85177 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Sierra Leone in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bangura (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

□The Security Council welcomes the results of the meeting of the National Consultative Conference on 12 February 1996 that overwhelmingly supported the decision to maintain 26 February 1996 as the date of the elections. The Council also welcomes the renewed promise of the Government of Sierra Leone, through the Chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council, to abide by the will of the people expressed through the Conference to hold the elections as scheduled. The Council notes that the Chairman of the Interim National Electoral Commission has confirmed that all the necessary technical arrangements are in place for elections to proceed.

□The Security Council reiterates its belief that the holding of free and fair elections as scheduled is of critical importance to Sierra Leone's transition to democratic constitutional rule. Any delay in the elections or interruption in this process is likely to erode international donor support for Sierra Leone. It is also likely to greatly increase the potential for further instability and violence, with devastating consequences for the people of Sierra Leone.

□The Security Council cautions all groups and individuals in Sierra Leone not to attempt to disrupt through violence or intimidation the electoral process which the great majority of the people of Sierra Leone support. The Council calls upon the Government to fulfil its undertaking to ensure a safe and free environment for the elections.

□The Security Council urges all parties to end the violence in Sierra Leone. The Council welcomes the initial contacts between the Government and the Revolutionary United Front and calls upon the Revolutionary United Front to renew its cease-fire and to enter into a full dialogue for peace without any conditions.

□The Security Council expresses its continued concern about the humanitarian situation and suffering of the people resulting from the conflict in Sierra Leone. The Council calls on Member States to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to address this problem.

□The Security Council commends the efforts of the Secretary-General to assist the conduct of the elections, and in particular the establishment of the Joint International Observer Group. It also commends the work of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to support the democratic transition and to facilitate peace negotiations between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front. The Council appreciates the important role of the Organization of African Unity and others, including States neighbouring Sierra Leone, in attempting to bring peace to that country.

□The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the situation in Sierra Leone and to keep the Council informed of all significant developments.□

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1996/7.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.35 pm.